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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1494
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3547
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2933
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN (GORKOWSKI)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/03/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KG](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RECEIVES JAPANESE MFA DIRECTOR FOR
CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS

Classified By: Amb. Tatiana Gfoeller, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Ambassador received Katsuro Kitigawa, Central Asian Affairs Director in the Japanese Foreign Ministry on July 31 during his first regional tour since his appointment. Kitigawa, a career diplomat new to the position and Central Asian and CIS affairs, broadly laid out Japanese policy for the region. He also asked for the Ambassador's input on a wide range of topics including elections, prospects for democracy and stability, the future of the Manas Transit Center, and development issues in the Kyrgyz Republic. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) Director for Central Asian and Caucasus Division Katsuro Kitigawa and Japanese Charge d'Affaires Yuichi Iizuka called on the Ambassador on July 31 to introduce the new Director to the region. Jumping immediately into the post-election situation, Kitigawa stated that the Japanese Prime Minister had not formulated a public statement on the July 23 Kyrgyz Presidential elections, but expects to shortly. He also anticipated high-level congratulatory message from the GOJ to President Bakiyev.

13. (SBU) Kitigawa broadly laid out Japanese policy towards the region -- noting a recent speech by the Japanese Foreign Minister focusing on possibilities for development and improving infrastructure, especially roads, railroads and borders, in Central Asia. Kitigawa referenced ongoing efforts in Uzbekistan to transform Tashkent's airport into a regional transportation hub and contrasted international development and investment activities of donors (e.g. Korea and Germany). He also said that he expects the GOJ to invite Turkmen President Berdimuhamedov to Japan later this year.

14. (SBU) Kitigawa then asked the Ambassador about her sense of which direction Central Asia is headed. In response, the Ambassador offered an overview of each of the Central Asian countries, concluding that in this region what matters are not only current states of affairs, but trajectories.

15. (SBU) Director Kitigawa also inquired about the recently-signed Manas Transit Center Agreement, noting that

his government had "followed negotiations closely." The Ambassador replied that the Transit Center was a new entity, explained the fundamental differences between it and the former Base, and reiterated the Center's importance to stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. Kitigawa affirmed his government's belief in the need to stabilize Afghanistan and surmised that maintaining the Transit Center in Kyrgyzstan was important to maintaining the stability of Kyrgyzstan as well.

¶6. (C) COMMENT AND BIO NOTE: Kitigawa admitted that he was new to the position - and showed it -- by asking extremely broad and basic questions about the region and at one point confusing Assistant Secretary Blake with former A/S Boucher. He noted that he does not speak Russian and is just beginning to learn about Central Asia and the CIS. He was previously assigned to the Japanese Embassy in Paris. Kitigawa appeared genuinely interested in development issues, but relatively uninformed about the key issues facing donors in Kyrgyzstan and the region. He mentioned that he and the Japanese Deputy FM are planning a trip to Washington in late August and hope to meet with A/S Blake at that time. Such a meeting might be useful in helping to orient this newcomer. END COMMENT.
GFOELLER